

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the specification, the paragraphs [0001] have been amended to correct minor editorial problems. The new paragraph has been amended to read:

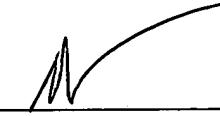
CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application claims priority based upon to U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/431,662, filed on December 8, 2002, the entire disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference. This application also claims priority under the Patent Cooperation Treaty based upon co-pending PCT application no. PCT/US03/38961 filed December 8, 2003.

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

THELEN REID & PRIEST, LLP



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